

the productivity of wastelands to grown appropriate bio-mass specially fuel-wood and fodder as also to prevent further degradation. Hence agricultural production are generally not feasible on such land at the first stage of development. This Scheme is being implemented on watershed basis as per the Guidelines for Watershed Development with effect from 1.4.95. An amount of Rs. 210.00 crores has been earmarked for the Scheme during 2001-02. State-wise details of assistance given to States from 1.4.95 to 31st January, 2001 is given at Annexure. [See Appendix 192, Annexure No. 15]

Increasing poverty In backward tribal areas

† 2829. SHRI LAJPAT RAI: Will the Minister of RURAL DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

- (a) whether poverty is increasing day-by-day in the backward tribal areas of the country during the last one decade;
- (b) whether it has become too difficult for them even to subsist and most of those areas are starving;
- (c) whether Government have assessed the situation in those affected areas and districts; and
- (d) if so, whether any action has been taken/proposed to be taken to deal with the situation forever?

THE MINISTER OF RURAL DEVELOPMENT (SHRI M. VENKAIAH NAIDU): (a) Comparable estimates of poverty among the Scheduled Tribe population are not available. However, as per the latest estimates, which are available for the year 1993-94, 51.94% of the Scheduled Tribe population are living below the poverty line in rural areas while for urban areas it was 41.14% No separate estimate is available for backward areas in the country.

(b) to (d) In order to alleviate poverty, various schemes/ programmes are being implemented by the Ministry of Tribal Affairs, in addition to the poverty alleviation schemes, of other Ministries/

† Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

Departments. These are Special Central Assistance (SCA) to Tribal Sub-Plan (TSP), Vocational Training Centres, Gramin Bank, Tribal Development Cooperative Corporations and State Tribal Development Corporations. The number of families assisted during the last three years through various schemes by the State Governments under point 11 (b) of 20 Point Programme to enable them to rise above the poverty line are as under:

Year	Target (No. of families assisted)	Achievement (No. of families assisted)	Percentage Achievement
1997-98	10,96,582	9,85,509	90
1998-99	11,00,682	11,88,300	108
1999-2000	11,13,360	9,98,468	90

NCAER Survey, 1994 regarding availability of drinking water

2830. SHRI SURESH PACHOURI: Will the Minister of RURAL DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether the National Council for Applied Economic Research (NCAER) in its survey conducted in 1994 found that about one-half of all villages in India do not have any source of protected drinking water;

(b) if so, whether assessment of the NCAER is in sharp contrast to the official claim that in 1994 more than 60 per cent villages were receiving adequate supply of potable water; and

(c) if so, the reasons for the difference?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RURAL DEVELOPMENT [DR. (SHRIMATI) RITA VERMA]: (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) and (c) Drinking water supply being a State subject, the schemes for supply of safe drinking water to the rural habitations of the country are implemented by the State Governments from their own resources. The Central Government supplements the efforts of